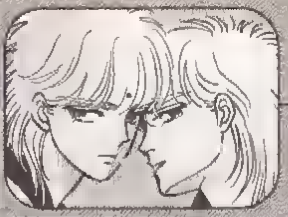
CIPHER

Volume 7

By Minako Narita



Siva & Cipher

Siva (Jake) & Cipher (Roy): identical twin brothers made famous by their childhood acting success. They used to share not just a face, but also a single identity. Now that Cipher has moved away to Los Angeles, it's time for the twins to come into their own.

Anise

Schoolmate and good friend of Siva (Jake) and Cipher (Roy). She was on the verge of taking her relationship with Cipher to a romantic level but it didn't quite work out. Now she has to adjust to Cipher being completely gone from her life and finds herself in the role of watching over his brother.

The Story So Far

Siva (Jake) met a girl named Dana Jackson. Coincidentally, she happened to be the lead actress in a movie with Cipher (Roy), who was acting as "Siva." Dana assumed that she was spending both her professional and personal time with Siva and developed strong feelings for him. At the same time, Siva wanted to have an actual relationship with Dana, but it was now complicated by the nature of the twins' deception.

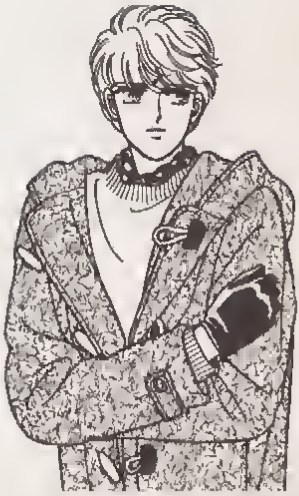
Dana's mother quickly grew suspicious. Out of guilt and his concern for Dana, Siva revealed the entire story of their lives to Mrs. Jackson, something he hadn't even shared with Anise. Mrs. Jackson decided to leave it up to Cipher to tell the truth to Dana instead of telling her daughter herself. By this time, Cipher found he was also developing feelings for her. While the twins argued over the timing of their confession, fate took a tragic turn. Dana was killed in a car accident.

Cipher felt a terrible guilt about putting his own interests ahead of Siva's feelings. Despondent, he decided it was now time to finally make a change. He left New York for Los Angeles to pursue an independent career under his real name. During a tearful departure from Anise, he asked her to look out for his brother while he was gone.

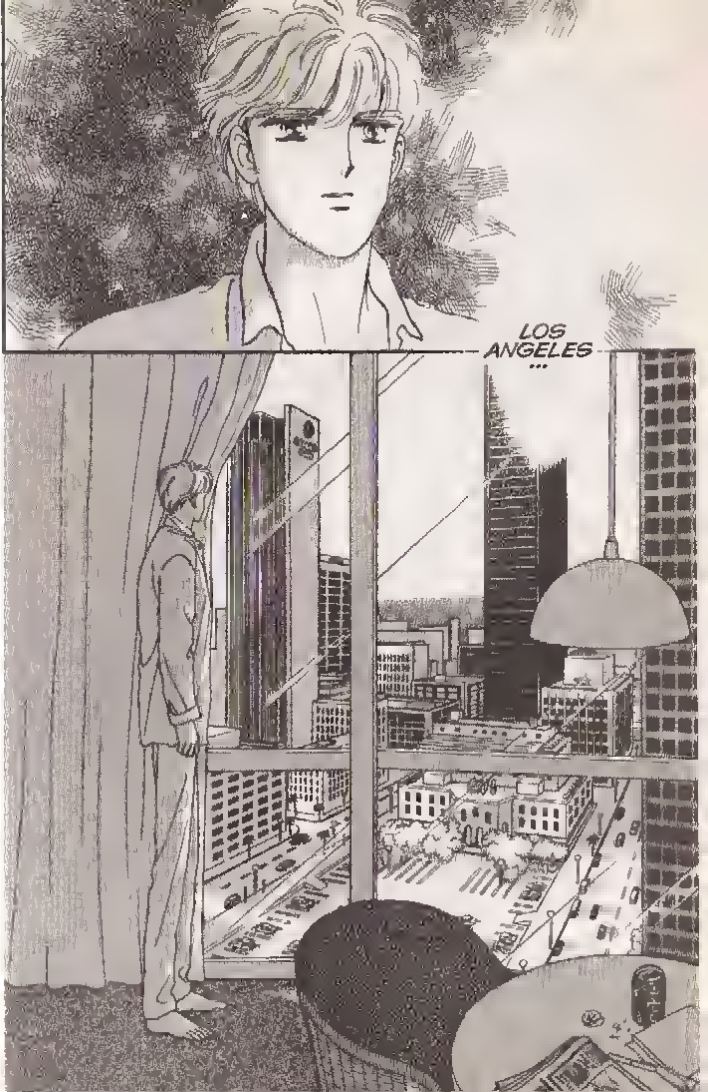
ANISE...
THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO FOR YOU, OR FOR JAKE.
I'M SO ASHAMED AND ANGRY WITH MYSELF FOR BEING SO HELPLESS.
I'M GLAD YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME BUT, I'M OKAY. I CAN MAKE IT ON MY OWN.
TAKE CARE OF JAKE AND BE HAPPY
GOOD-BYE

CIPHER

Scene 9. BAD DREAMS



I'LL NEVER SEE JAKE OR ANISE AGAIN.
EVERY TIME I WAKE UP I REMEMBER
...DANA IS DEAD.
I HAVE BAD DREAMS EVERY NIGHT.
AND NEW YORK...
...I'LL NEVER GO BACK THERE.


LOS ANGELES

WELCOME TO L.A., CIPHER.
OR WOULD YOU RATHER I CALL YOU ROY?
YES.. I PREFER ROY.
THAT'S MY WORK NAME FROM NOW ON.
FINE! ROY IT IS.
YOU CAN CALL ME SAM.
HERE'S YOUR CONTRACT.
IT'S PRETTY MUCH LIKE WE DISCUSSED.
IF YOU'RE READY, THEN SIGN IT. AND INITIAL THESE DOCUMENTS.

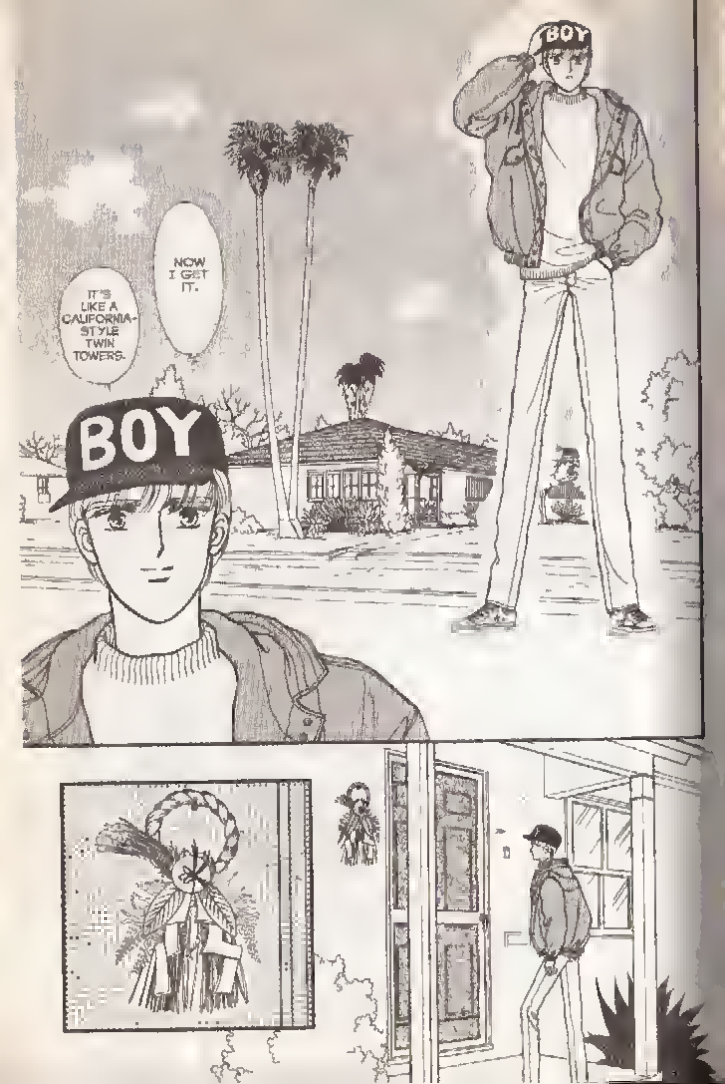
IF YOU WANT TO RENT, HOW ABOUT SHARING AN APARTMENT?
OF COURSE!
IT'LL BE HARD TO FIND A PLACE DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON.
YEAH.
I STILL DON'T HAVE A PLACE TO LIVE YET.
HM ...
CAN I ADD MY ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER LATER?
I'VE NEVER LIVED WITH ANYBODY BUT JAKE.
YOU MEAN ...
...A ROOM-MATE?
AND RENT HERE ISN'T CHEAP.
IT WILL HELP YOU GET TO KNOW THE TOWN BETTER.

MAYBE IT MEANS THERE'S NO GUARANTEE I'LL MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO LIVE ALONE.
IS THAT IT?
I WONDER WHY SHE'S PUSHING IT SO HARD.
IF YOU WANT A ROOMMATE YOUR OWN AGE, YOU CAN TRY A COLLEGE BULLETIN BOARD.
DING DONG
PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS
ROOMMATE TO SHARE
BASS PLAYER WANTED
P.O. BOXES
WESTWOOD VILLAGE
DING DONG

RENTALS to SHARE
Rip
HELLO?
I SAW YOUR AD FOR A ROOMMATE
YEAH. WHY DON'T YOU COME TAKE A LOOK AT IT ON SUNDAY?
KNOW WHERE IT IS?
I THINK SO.
I'LL BE THERE AROUND TWO O'CLOCK.

MARCH 5, 1988. THANKS TO EVERYBODY WHO GANG THE "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" INTO THE CHAKICHAKI HOUSE ANSWERING MACHINE! IT MADE ME SOOO HAPPY!!
BY THE WAY CHAKICHAKI HOUSE IS THE MANGA INFORMATION PHONE LINE MY COUSIN (AND ROOMMATE) RUNS AS A HOBBY. PLEASE CALL AND LEAVE A MESSAGE.
CHAK
YOU'LL SEE TWIN PALM TREES IN FRONT OF MY HOME
BYE.
CLICK
CATTIE TALK!
CUT THAT OUT!
IF YOU HAVE ANY MESSAGES FOR ME SHE'LL TRY TO PASS THEM ALONG (THOUGH WE LIVE IN THE SAME HOUSE WE DON'T MEET OFTEN). GIVE IT A TRY IF YOU FEEL LIKE IT!
CMK EDITOR NOTE WRITTEN IN 1988: THIS PHONE LINE IS NO LONGER IN SERVICE
WITH TERRIBLE TIGHT DRESS AND LAMED PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND, I'VE GOTTEN BACK TO DRAWING THIS SERIES AGAIN. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL IN VOLUME 8!
MARCH 28 1988 MAMO
A HOME...
I'VE GOT TO GIVE UP THINKING THAT "MY HOME IS ON THE SCREEN."

SO WHY...
...DO I KEEP WORKING AS AN ACTOR?
TWIN PALM TREES?


BOY
NOW I GET IT.
IT'S LIKE A CALIFORNIA-STYLE TWIN TOWERS.
BOY

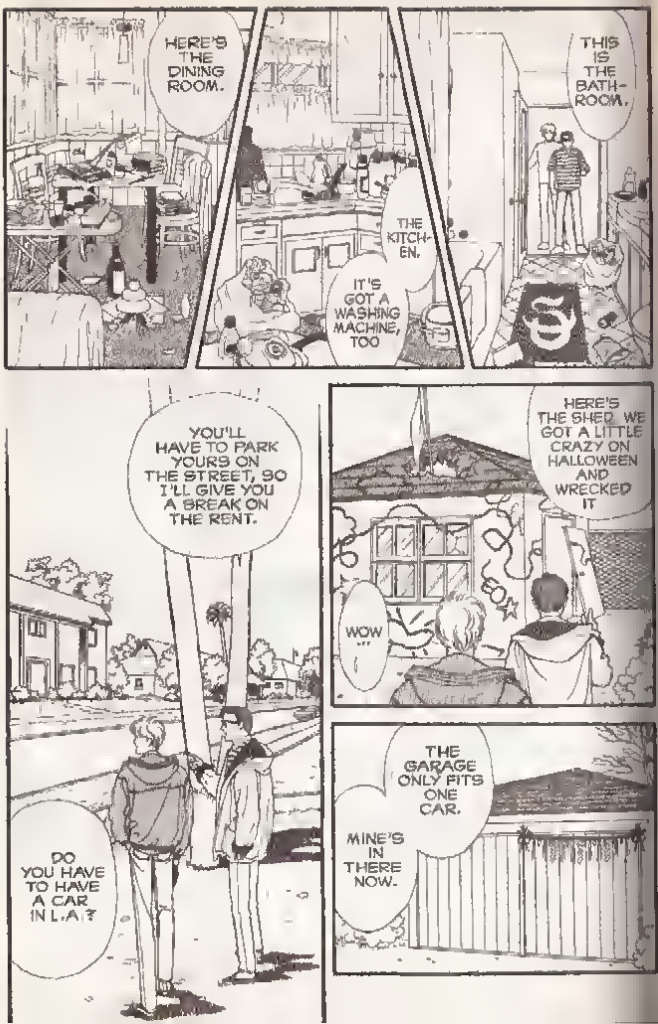
?
DING DONG
COMING!
BAM
BANG BANG
KLUNK
HI.
I SEE YOU FOUND THE PLACE.
THANK YOU.
SAY...
WHAT'S THAT BY THE DOOR?
HOW DO YOU DO? I'M ROY RANG.
I'M HARUMI TAKESHITA. CALL ME HAL.
COME ON IN.

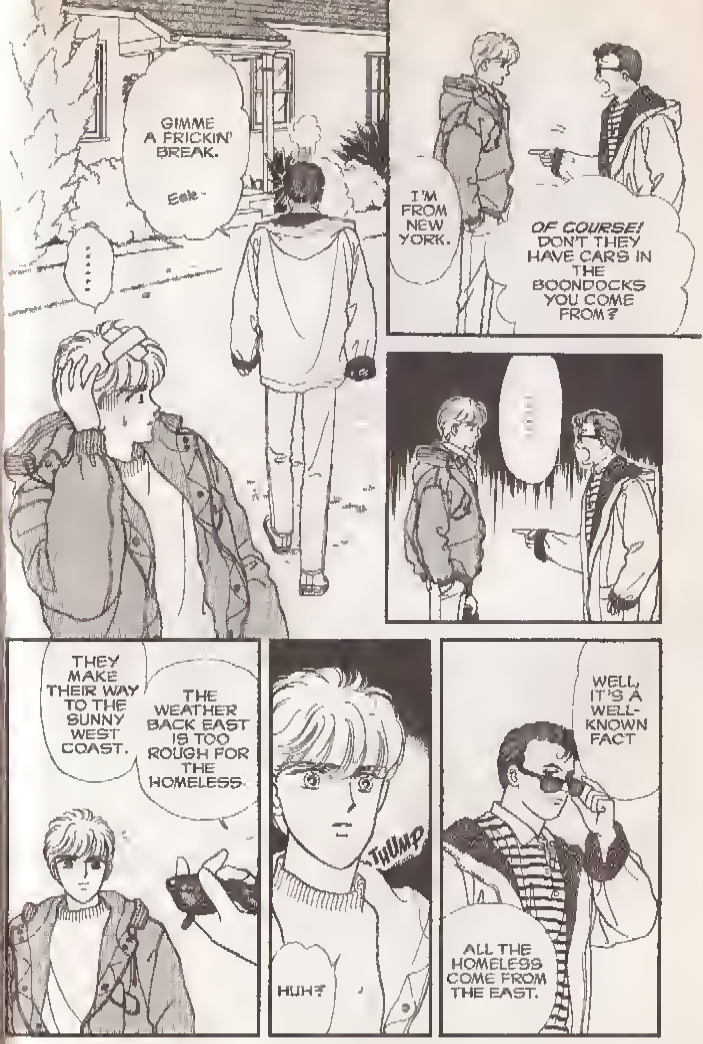
BWA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
GU
P
THAT'S SORT OF A JAPANESE NEW YEAR'S WREATH.
MY FAMILY IS JAPANESE.
JAPANESE! THAT EXPLAINS IT!
OY
IT LOOKS LIKE A SUMO WRESTLER'S OUTFIT!
ANYWAY, HAVE A SEAT!
IT'S A LITTLE MESSY, BUT YOU CAN FIND A SPOT.
YEAH, IT DOES LOOK LIKE THAT.
YOU GOT SOME FUNNY IDEAS.
HEE HEE HEE HEE

UH... TAKE... TAKA...
TAKESHITA! MY NAME'S TAKESHITA. I'LL WRITE IT DOWN FOR YOU.
BA
BA
BA
ARE YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF CLEANING OR SOMETHING?
IN JAPAN, THEY ONLY DO BIG CLEANING ONCE A YEAR... BEFORE NEW YEAR'S!
SNAP
NO, DUMMY!
DON'T LAUGH, OKAY?
HERE'S THE IMPORTANT PART.
UH... ALL RIGHT.
H-A-R-U-O-M-I.
HERE. LOOK AT THIS.
SHOCK
It's already January 5.

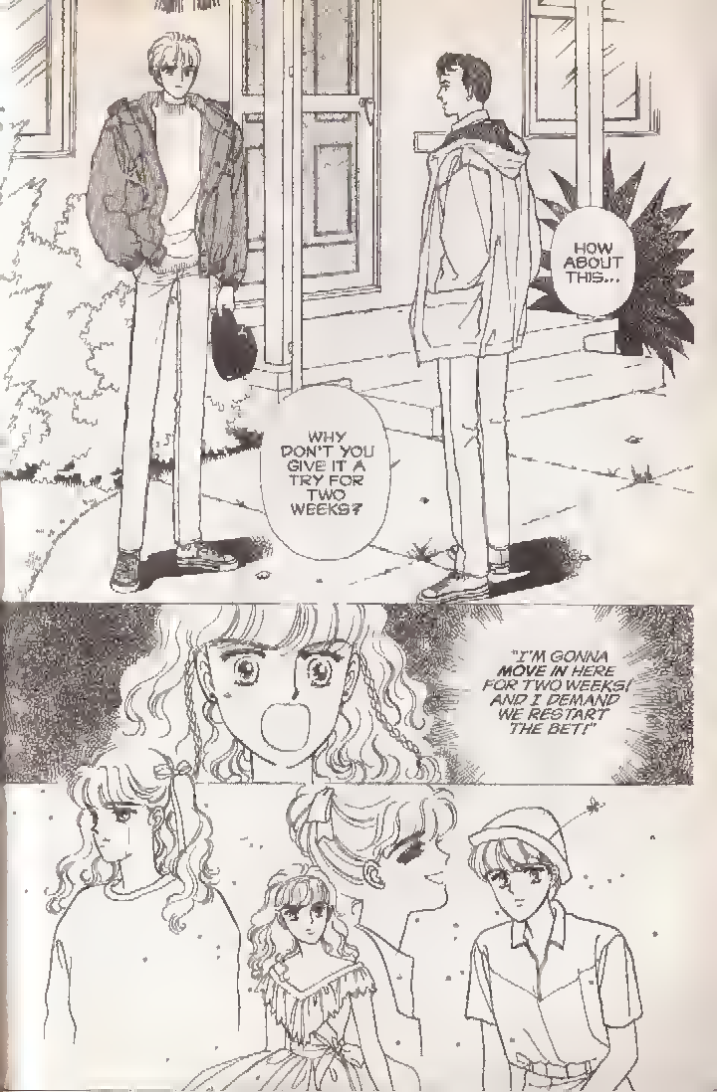
YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T LAUGH!
HMPH!
T-A-K-E-
HARUOMI TAKESHITA
TRANSLATED HAROLD
LOOK, JUST CALL ME HAL, OKAY?
I'M NINETEEN, AND A SOPHO-MORE AT UCLA.
SHI
WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU MUST BE A STUDENT.
I'M AN ACTOR.
UH... NO.
DROP
THAT MEANS YOU'RE GONNA SAY...
"I'VE GOT NO INCOME."
DOESN'T IT?

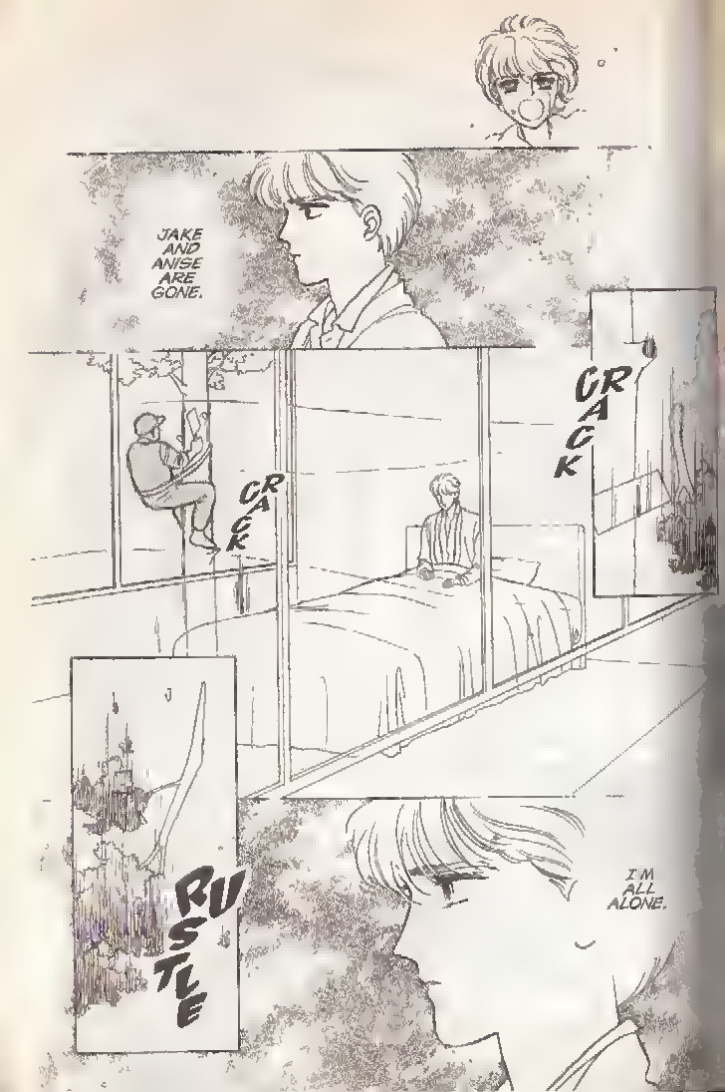
I'LL SHOW YOU MY BANK-BOOK TO PROVE IT!
I'VE GOT ENOUGH IN SAVINGS TO PAY THE RENT FOR A WHILE!
EVEN MY LITTLE SISTER SAYS SHE'S AN ACTRESS, BUT AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, SHE'S JUST A HOUSE CLEANER!
MUSICIANS AND ACTORS ARE ALL LIKE THAT! THEY CAN'T PAY THE RENT!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!
HMM ...
THIS IS THE EMPTY BED-ROOM.
MY LAST ROOMMATE LEFT MOST OF HIS FURNITURE BEHIND, SO YOU CAN MOVE IN TONIGHT.
LEMME SHOW YOU AROUND
OH FOR-GET IT.
WHEW


HERE'S THE DINING ROOM.
THE KITCH-EN.
IT'S GOT A WASHING MACHINE, TOO
THIS IS THE BATH-ROOM.
YOU'LL HAVE TO PARK YOURS ON THE STREET, SO I'LL GIVE YOU A BREAK ON THE RENT.
DO YOU HAVE TO HAVE A CAR IN L.A.?
HERE'S THE SHED. WE GOT A LITTLE CRAZY ON HALLOWEEN AND WRECKED IT
WOW ...
THE GARAGE ONLY FITS ONE CAR.
MINE'S IN THERE NOW.


GIMME A FRICKIN' BREAK.
Eek
I'M FROM NEW YORK.
OF COURSE! DON'T THEY HAVE CARS IN THE BOONDOCKS YOU COME FROM?
THEY MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE SUNNY WEST COAST.
THE WEATHER BACK EAST IS TOO ROUGH FOR THE HOMELESS.
THUMP
HUH?
WELL, IT'S A WELL-KNOWN FACT
ALL THE HOMELESS COME FROM THE EAST.

THIS GUY IS PRETTY WILD.
UH..
WELL..
YOU WANNA MOVE IN?
SO WHAT'S IT GONNA BE?
MAYBE YOU DON'T WANT TO DECIDE RIGHT NOW.
I...
SOME PEOPLE JUST CAN'T LIVE TOGETHER NO MATTER HOW WELL THEY GET ALONG.
LIVING WITH SOMEONE ISN'T EASY.


HOW ABOUT THIS...
WHY DON'T YOU GIVE IT A TRY FOR TWO WEEKS?
"I'M GONNA MOVE IN HERE FOR TWO WEEKS! AND I DEMAND WE RESTART THE BET!"

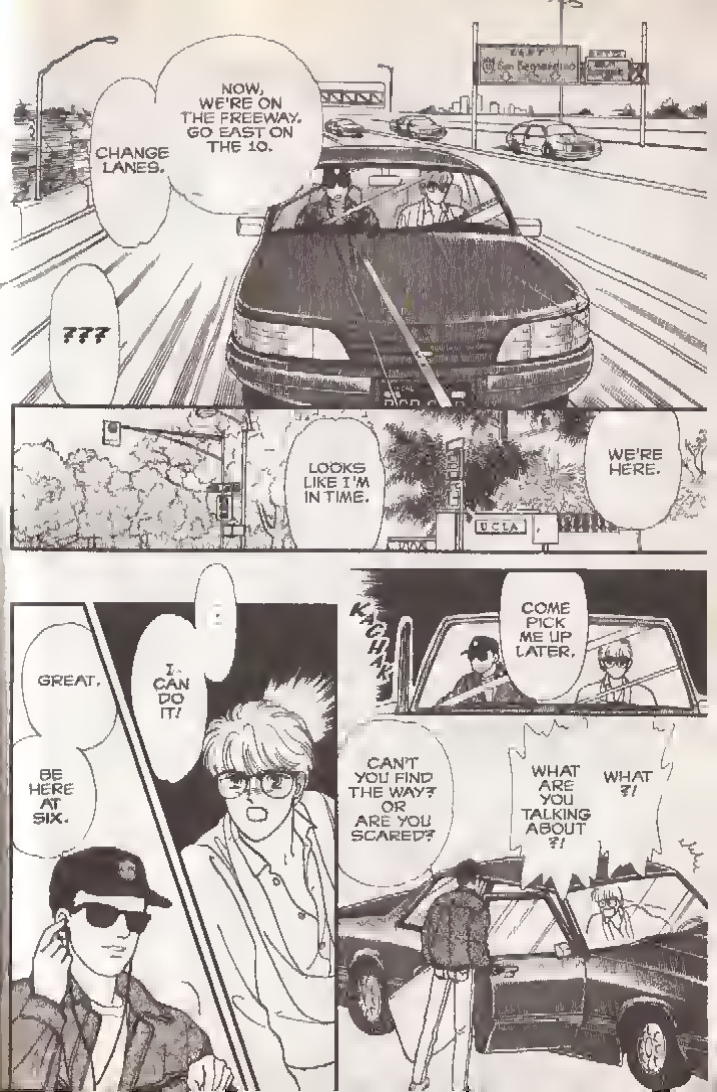

JAKE AND ANISE ARE GONE.
CRACK
CRACK
RUSTLE
I'M ALL ALONE.

THAT'S RIGHT... I'M TRYING FOR TWO WEEKS...
I'M IN HAL'S PLACE ...

KLAK
BAM BANG
BANG BANG
?!
HALT!

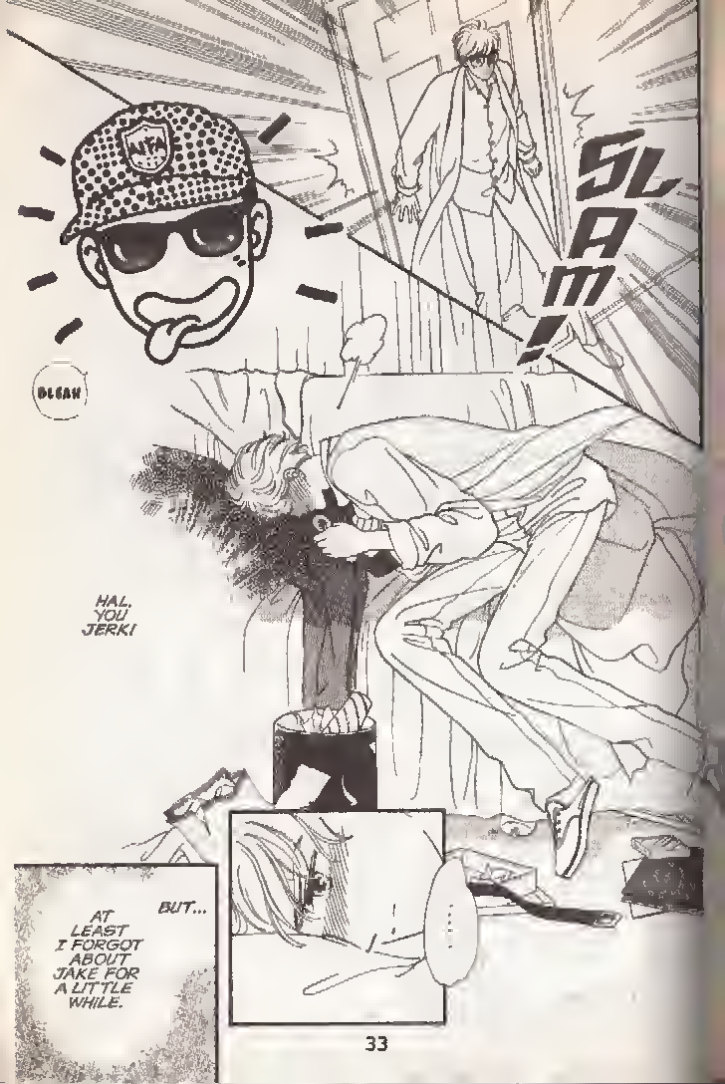
♪ BA CHIKA BA CHIKA BA CHIKA
HEY.
SORRY. DID I WAKE YOU?
HAL?
IS YOUR MAJOR MUSIC OR COMPUTERS?
NEITHER. ARCHITECTURE.
YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF HOBBIES

EH?
C'MON!
OH DAMN! I GOTTA GET GOING!
HEY, HAL!
DON'T YOU HAVE TO GO TO CLASS?
EAST OF EDEN I
!
GET IN AND DRIVE!
WHAT?!
OKAY, OKAY!
HURRY UP! I'M LATE!


NOW, WE'RE ON THE FREEWAY. GO EAST ON THE 10.
CHANGE LANES.
???
LOOKS LIKE I'M IN TIME.
WE'RE HERE.
UCLA
KACHAK
COME PICK ME UP LATER.
I CAN DO IT!
GREAT.
BE HERE AT SIX.
CAN'T YOU FIND THE WAY? OR ARE YOU SCARED?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
WHAT?!

SNICKER SNICKER
I'M NOT YOUR CHAUFFEUR, YOU KNOW! I'M YOUR ROOMMATE!
DID YOU HEAR ME, HAL?!
SLAM
DO YOU TWO KNOW HAL?
YES, I MOVED IN YESTERDAY.
for now
SORT OF.
HE'S KINDA FAMOUS.
HI.
ARE YOU REALLY HAL'S ROOMMATE?
?

HE'S EITHER A GENIUS OR INSANE.
IT'S HARD TO LIVE WITH HIM
HE CAN'T FIND ANYBODY WHO'LL PUT UP WITH HIM. DID HE LOWER THE RENT FOR YOU?
GOOD LUCK, PAL.
YOU'LL NEED IT.
UH... THANKS.
THINK HE'LL BE OKAY?
SNICKER
CARE-FUL. HE CAN HEAR YOU.
AH
OH NO!
Bad news. Hasn't washed his face.
Bathroom
Pajamas

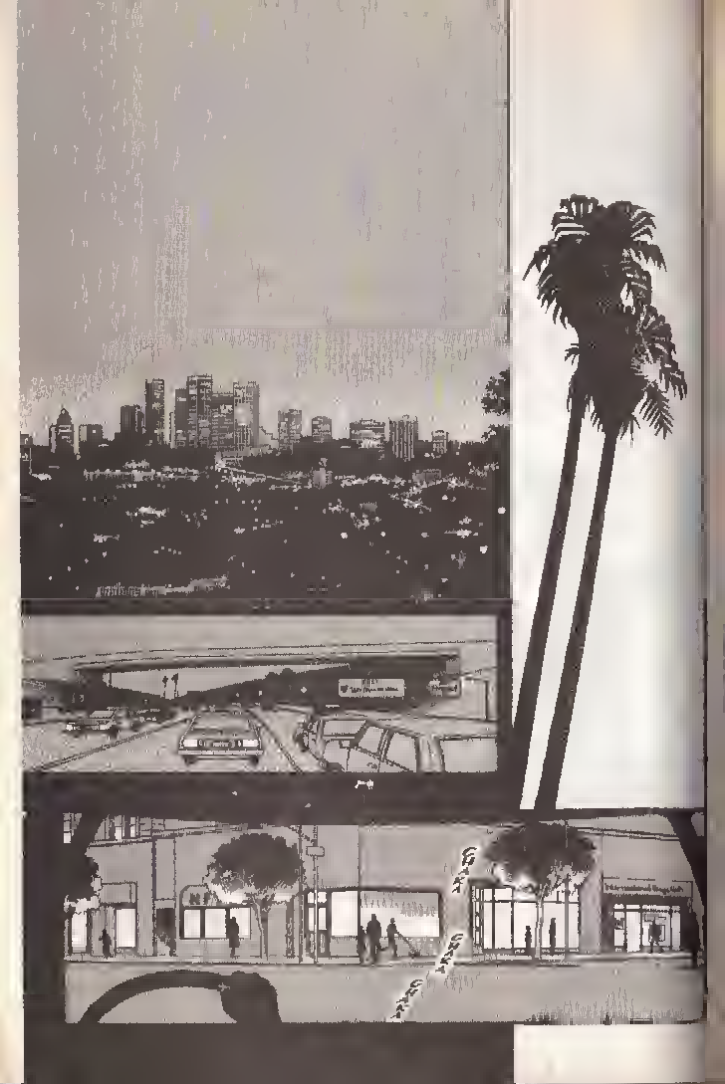

SLAM!
BLEAH
HAL, YOU JERK!
BUT... AT LEAST I FORGOT ABOUT JAKE FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

...BECAUSE EXCEPT FOR RECENTLY, I WAS ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT HIM.
IT'S SO NOTICE-ABLE...
ROY? GOOD MORNING. IT'S SAM.
DID I WAKE YOU?
HELLO?
RRRING
GOT SOME-THING FOR ME?
OH, GOOD MORNING!
I NEED YOU TO COME IN AND AUDITION.
YES. A T.V. DRAMA.
ON THE TENTH, AT ONE O'CLOCK
ALL RIGHT. I'LL GIVE IT A TRY.
THANKS

WHY DO I KEEP WORK-ING?
IS IT TO GIVE ME SOMETHING ELSE TO FOCUS ON?
CLICK
BEEP

THAT'S IT... AND WHAT'S MORE...
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN JUST UP AND QUIT NOW.
AFTER ALL I SACRIFICED FOR WORK... I CAN'T QUIT NOW!

I FEEL LIKE IF I DON'T KEEP BEING AN ACTOR FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, I WON'T BE FORGIVEN.
IF I KEEP ON THE STAGE UNTIL I DIE?
WILL I BE FORGIVEN THEN?

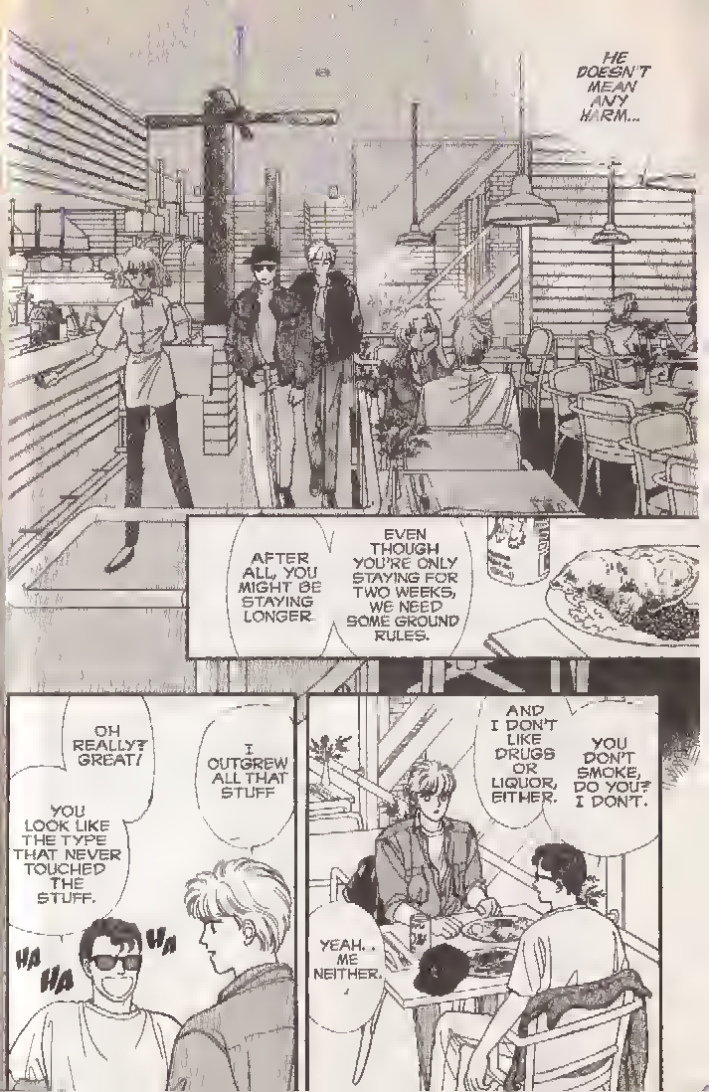


YOU MADE IT.
HEY!
IT WASN'T SCARY BY YOUR-SELF?
DIDN'T GET LOST?
NO, I DIDN'T.
OH, PLEASE!
WHAT ?!
HMM ...

SMIRK
HMPH.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL DO JUST FINE IN L.A.
BAM
LET'S GET SOMETHING TO EAT.
TONIGHT I'M BUYING
HAL.
WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE SAID IF I'D GOTTEN TOTALLY LOST AND WAS LATE?
.....
MAYBE ...
MAYBE HE DID THIS JUST SO I CAN GET USED TO L.A.

SAME THING.
IT'S ALL THE SAME, AS LONG AS YOU GOT HERE EVENTU-ALLY.
MAYBE...
...IT WAS ALL JUST TO SAY THAT LINE.
BUT... WHAT IF I'D GOTTEN IN AN ACCIDENT?
TAP TAP TAP
HUH?
UH...
I MEAN, JUST HYPOTHETI-CALLY...
UH OH! I THINK I MADE HIM FEEL GUILTY!
TURN
YOU FRIGGIN' MORON!

...IS PROBABLY WHAT I'D SAY.
SWOON
YOU...
YOU MISERABLE...
IF YOU WRECK MY PRECIOUS CAR?!
STUPID ASSWIPE! YOU'D BETTER REPLACE IT WITH A PORSCHE GOT IT?!
GRRR
WHAT'S WRONG?
C'MON, I'M GETTIN' HUNGRY.


HE DOESN'T MEAN ANY HARM...
AFTER ALL, YOU MIGHT BE STAYING LONGER.
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE ONLY STAYING FOR TWO WEEKS, WE NEED SOME GROUND RULES.
OH REALLY? GREAT!
I OUTGREW ALL THAT STUFF
YOU LOOK LIKE THE TYPE THAT NEVER TOUCHED THE STUFF.
HA HA
HA
AND I DON'T LIKE DRUGS OR LIQUOR, EITHER.
YOU DON'T SMOKE, DO YOU? I DON'T.
YEAH.. ME NEITHER.

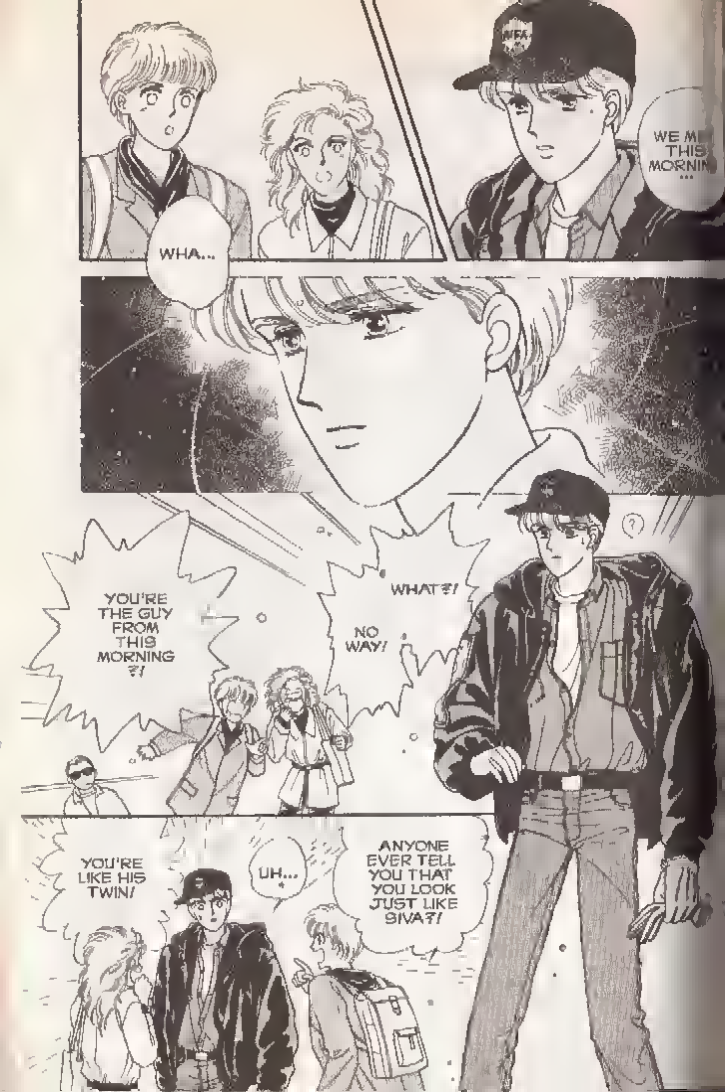
IT'LL HAVE TO BE...
...A CAT!
...A DOG!
YEAH...
IF WE GET ONE...
I GUE YOU DO HAVE AN PET
IF YOU WANT ONE, WE'LL HAVE TO DISCUSS IT FIRST.
RIGHT.
LET'S NOT GET ONE.
WE COULD DECIDE ON GROCERIES AND HOW MANY TIMES WE EAT TOGETHER ...
...AND THEN SPLIT THE COST. HOW'S THAT SOUND?
THE HARD PART IS DECIDING ABOUT COOKING AND SHOPPING.

** it reads "I guess you don't have any pets."
*** it reads "Now then –"

ME?
WELL...
HA!...
WHAT DO YOU USUALLY EAT?
GASP
THAT'LL WORK, AS LONG AS THERE'S NOT TOO MUCH DIFFERENCE IN THE THINGS AND AMOUNTS WE EAT.
OKAY.
GASP
I LIKE PASTA.
AND MEAT, TOO.
FOR LUNCH, I USUALLY HAVE A BURGER.
Glint
IN THE MORNING...
REALLY? GREAT!
BUT WHY ARE YOU SURPRISED?
WOW... THAT'S PRETTY MUCH THE SAME AS ME
I HAVE AN ENGLISH BREAKFAST.
My mother is a Brit.

I THOUGHT YOU ACTORS WERE ALWAYS DIETING ALL THE TIME!
WELL, YOU SURE DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT!
PUNK
I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU HAD SUSHI EVERYDAY.
YEAH, I CAN SEE THAT!
EMPTY
NOT ME.
YOU DID!
HEY, HAL!
WHAT THE..?
IT'S NOTHING COMPARED TO YOU BUYING ME A PORSCHE.
WELL ...
YOU DON'T MIND PICKING UP THE TAB?
THANKS, HARU.
UH...
OH...

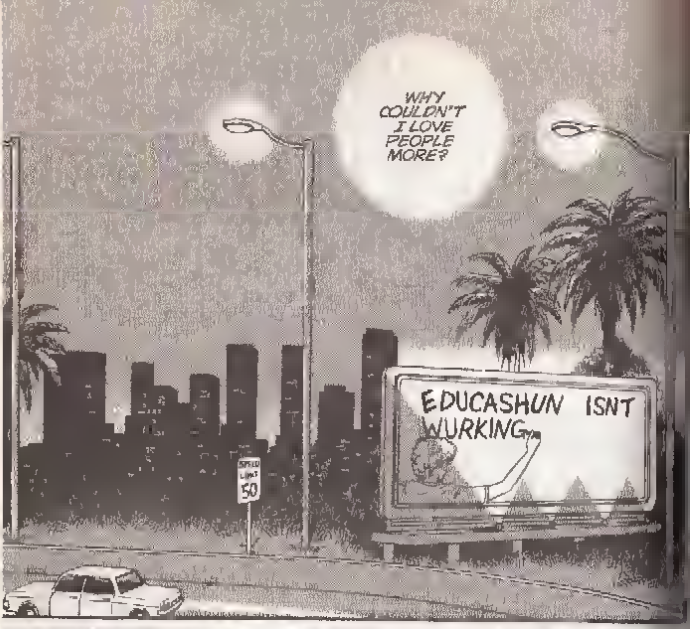
HOW'S IT GOING?
ON YOUR WAY HOME?
ARE YOU GUYS GOING SOMEWHERE?
YEAH.
YEAH. WE ARE.
SO HAL...DID YOU FIND A ROOMMATE?
THIS IS ROY.
YEAH. LET ME INTRODUCE YOU!
HUH?
Thump
UH...
HI.
THIS IS CINDY AND TANYA


WFA
WE M
THIS
MORNIN
...
WHA...
YOU'RE THE GUY FROM THIS MORNING ?!
WHAT?!
NO WAY!
YOU'RE LIKE HIS TWIN!
UH...
ANYONE EVER TELL YOU THAT YOU LOOK JUST LIKE SIVA?!

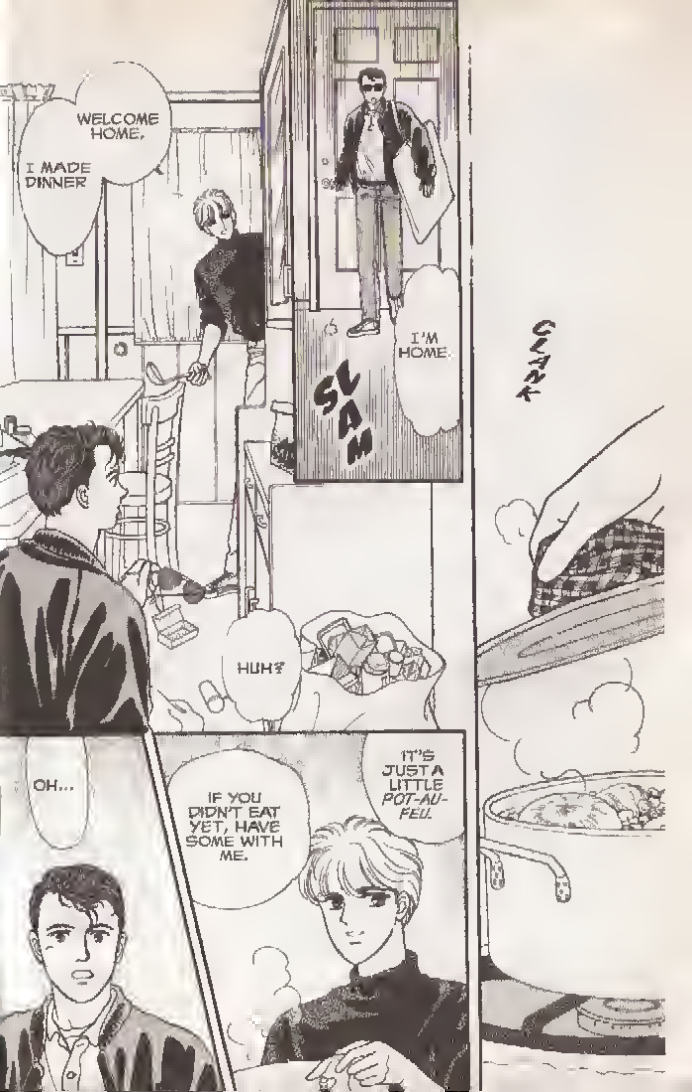
GO, IF YOU WANT.
WELL... WE'VE GOT TO...
GOING HOME ALREADY?
WHY DON'T WE ALL GO OUT SOMEWHERE?
HAL. COME WITH US.
NO WAY! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE THEY INVITED.
I DON'T NEED YOU WORRYING ABOUT ME LIKE THAT!
GO ON! GET GOING!

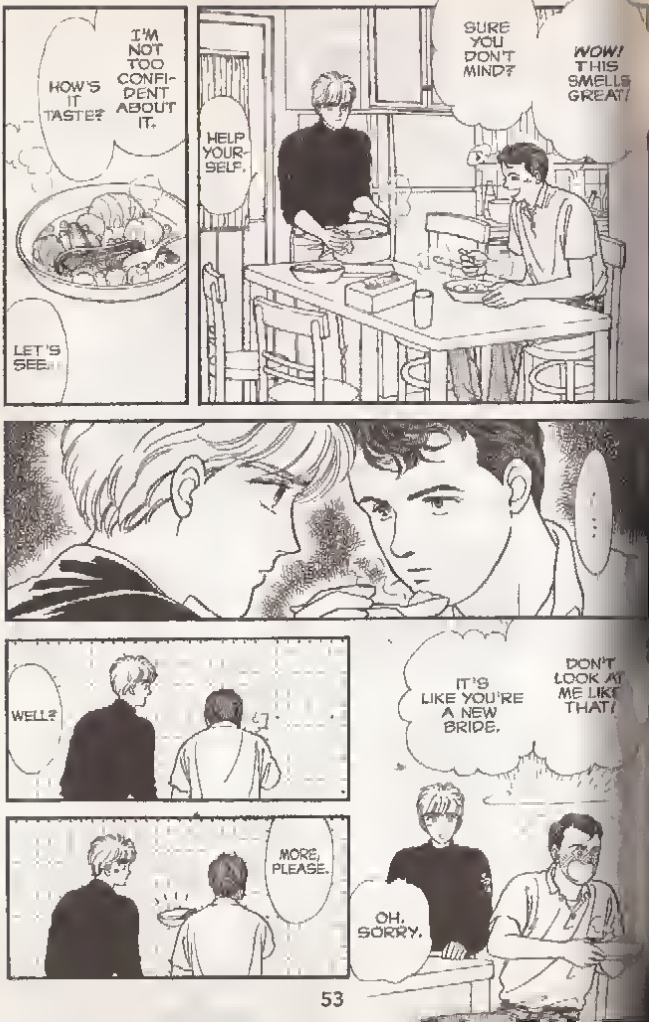
NO PROB!
♪
HE DOESN'T HAVE A CAR YET YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE HIM A RIDE HOME.
A NEW TOWN, NEW JOB, NEW FRIENDS.
MUFFLER SHOPS
ALL THIS EXCITEMENT IS A GOOD THING.
IT'S MAKING THINGS EASIER.

EVEN THOUGH I STILL FEEL LIKE HALF OF ME HAS BEEN CUT OFF


WHY COULDN'T I LOVE PEOPLE MORE?
EDUCASHUN ISNT WURKING
SPEED LIMIT 50

I WANT TO DO SOMETHING FOR SOMEONE.
I WANT TO BE KIND.


WELCOME HOME.
I MADE DINNER
SLAM
I'M HOME.
CLANK
HUH?
OH...
IF YOU DIDN'T EAT YET, HAVE SOME WITH ME.
IT'S JUST A LITTLE *POT-AU-FEU*.

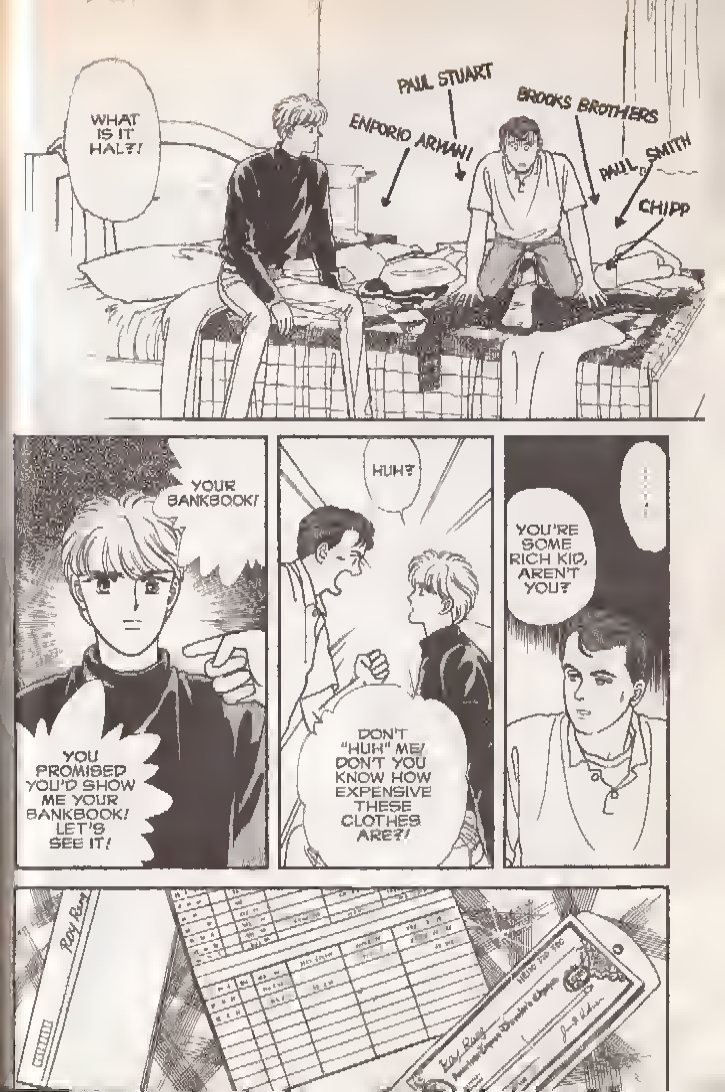

I'M NOT TOO CONFI-DENT ABOUT IT.
HOW'S IT TASTE?
LET'S SEE...
HELP YOUR-SELF.
SURE YOU DON'T MIND?
WOW! THIS SMELLS GREAT!
WELL?
MORE, PLEASE.
IT'S LIKE YOU'RE A NEW BRIDE.
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!
OH, SORRY.

WELL ...
IT'S CHEAPER THAN BUYING YOU A PORSCHE.
THUNK
YOU SHOULD JUST MAKE WHAT YOU WANT, AND NOT WAIT FOR ME
?
BUT REALLY ...
YOU DON'T NEED TO FUSS OVER THINGS LIKE THIS.
I DID SOME CHORES, YEAH. I UNPACKED, AND WENT SHOPPING.
FORGET THAT CRAP I SAID.
YOU DIDN'T SPEND ALL DAY CLEANING THE HOUSE, DID YOU?
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!

OH, DON'T OVERREACT. IT'S STILL BETTER THAN YOUR ROOM.
YEAH, BUT...
JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, IT WAS EMPTY.
AND YOU GOT A LOT OF TAPES.
CAN I BORROW SOME?
SURE.
"BOY"... IT'S A LONDON BOUTIQUE, RIGHT?
I KNOW THIS BRAND
BOY
THAT WAS A GIFT FROM A FRIEND.
WOW. THAT'S A COOL JACKET.
WOW!
WHAT, NO BATTERIES?
A DISCMAN! IT'S SO SMALL!
NO WAY!
YOU'VE GOT A CD PLAYER?!

I DON'T MIND. HERE'S THE BATTERY.
CAN I?!
ARE YOU? SURE IT'S OKAY?
YOU CAN BORROW IT IF YOU WANT.
SMILE
I'LL GET IT BACK WHEN I WANT TO USE IT.
HA!?!
I CAN'T BORROW THIS.
HERE
.....

HA!?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT.
YOU JUST . .
WHY NOT?
IS SOME-THING WRONG ?
SCOTCH HOUSE
YOJI YAMAMOTO
GR AB


WHAT IS IT HAL?!
ENPORIO ARMANI
PAUL STUART
BROOKS BROTHERS
PAUL SMITH
CHIPP
YOUR BANKBOOK!
YOU PROMISED YOU'D SHOW ME YOUR BANKBOOK! LET'S SEE IT!
HUH?
DON'T "HUH" ME! DON'T YOU KNOW HOW EXPENSIVE THESE CLOTHES ARE?!
YOU'RE SOME RICH KID, AREN'T YOU?
Ricky Rent

SHUT
I DIDN'T BRING EVERYTHING I HAD.
OUR INCOME WAS STRICTLY DIVIDED.
I KNOW THERE WERE THREE OTHER ACCOUNTS NAMED "JAKE."
I THOUGHT I WAS POOR.
REALLY?
THAT'S ENOUGH TO PAY RENT HERE FOR A LIFETIME.
.....
WELL...
I HAD A FIXED BUDGET, AND SAVED THE REST...
DON'T YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH MONEY YOU'VE GOT?!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

I LEFT ALL THE CONTRACTS AND HOME EXPENSES UP TO HIM.
JAKE TOOK CARE OF EVERYTHING TILL NOW.
WHY DON'T YOU MOVE TO A NICER PLACE?
NO.
I'LL STAY HERE.
HMM.
.....

1986
JANUARY
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19 20 21 22 23 24 25
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